

Ramblings from Rome

Curia Newsletter – No. 52

June 2010

Institute News

March 4th: The Porta Latina scholastics are given the honour of serving at the Easter Sunday Papal Mass in an overflowing St Peter's Square.

After the Mass, the Pope greeted each of them individually.



April 17th: Br. Francis Shayo is ordained Deacon at Porta Latina by Mons. Raffaello Martinelli, Bishop of Frascati. [Prior to his episcopal appointment, Mons Martinelli had responsibility for the Confraternity of San Carlo which owns the Basilica of San Carlo where we have been serving for over a hundred years]. Francis will complete his last year at the Beda and live in our parish of the Holy Spirit in EUR

April 23rd: In the community oratory at Porta Latina, Fr General receives the Ascription to the Institute of Fr Benny Xavier Paramattom of the Diocese of Palghat, Kerala, and who has been a guest priest with us for the past year whilst finishing his Doctorate in Philosophy. [For those interested, the title of his doctoral thesis was: “Richard Swinburne’s Philosophical Arguments for the existence of God: A critical Study in the light of *Fides and Ratio*”]



Fr General receives the Ascription to the Institute of
Fr Benny Xavier Paramattom



Fr.General with Cardinal Law celebrating St. John at the Latin Gate

May 9th: Cardinal Bernard Francis Law, late Archbishop of Boston and now Archpriest of St Mary Majors, presides at the Mass for the feast of St John at the Latin Gate. He joined the community and friends for a light lunch in our grounds.

May 1st-12th: The eight scholastics doing the enculteration year have a workshop with don Marco Tanghetti in the recently opened Rosminian Retreat/Conference Centre at Capo Rizzuto, Calabria.

May 10th -22nd: Don Claudio Papa (Italian Provincial) and Don Fausto Gobber visit the brethren in Venezuela.

May 13th: Fr General receives the renewal of Temporary Vows of Brs. Jenson Paul, Manoj Mathew, Ravi Prahkash, Arokiadas A, Robin Kurian and Rafael Valero Gonzalez.

May 13th -14th: Formation meeting at Porta Latina of the staff (Frs Eduino Menestrina, Francis Menachery, Pierluigi Giroli), Fr Vito Nardin (Italian Novice-Master), Fr Gianni Picenardi (Scholastic Master), Sr Ave Vilardi (Vocations Promoter for Sisters of Providence), Sr. Maria Bruna (General Council) with Fr Marco Tanghetti and Sr. Brendan Dolphin RSM (input person)

June 11th: Death at Stresa of Fr Giovanni Battista Caproni of the Italian Province.

June 14th-19th: The 10th Italian Provincial Congregation takes place at Calvario.

June 27th: A pilgrimage to the Catacombs of St. Sebastian marks the beginning of the Third Probation [programme in preparation for Final Vows] for eight scholastics (three Indians, two East Africans, two Venezuelans, one Nigerian of the Italian Province).

June 30th: The Third Probation group, along with don Marco Tanghetti, Director of the programme, set off for Stresa (Feast of July 1st), thence to Calvario for a ten day Directed Retreat and afterwards to Rovereto for the main part which will last until September 1st when they return to Rome.



May 27th: Formal ceremony at Ratcliffe College of the closure of the U.K. Province of St. Thomas of Canterbury, in preparation for its being absorbed into the new Gentili Province.



June 15th: Inauguration of the new Gentili Province at Grace Dieu in the presence of brethren from the four affected Institute areas, Sisters, Ascribed Members, parishioners and friends.

Porta Latina Guests and Visitors

After the Major superiors' Meeting in April, Father David Myers stayed on in Rome to be host to four of his parishioners from St. Peter's Cardiff. They are seen here waiting for the 628 to take them to a very enjoyable evening at San Carlo al Corso. (Graffiti 'airbrushed!')



Bro Nigel Cave, Chris Neal, Maureen & Ray George, Fr. David Myers Fr. Michael O'Shea

Two of Fr. Anthony Meredith's sisters visited Porta Latina in May. Stella and her husband Mark Belderbos from Preston and Monica Little from Ilkley. His Eminence Francis Campbell, the British ambassador to the Holy See invited us to see the wonderful view of Rome from the balcony of his residence.



Fr. Anthony, Mark & Stella Belderbos, Monica Little

[more visitors p. 7]

Curia News

April 13th - 23rd - Annual workshop cum general affairs meeting of the Curia with the Major Superiors of Italy, U.K., Ireland, America, East Africa, Venezuela, New Zealand and India. A nostalgic occasion in one sense as, from now on, the U.K., Irish, American and New Zealand areas will be represented by the Provincial of their Gentili Province].

April 13th - A Day of Recollection with two talks from Fr Anthony Meredith.

April 14th - Fr Gearoid O’Conaire, O.F.M., Secretary of the USG Commission for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, gave input on that theme.

April 15th - 16th - These two days were devoted to talks and exercises by Fr Dermot McCaul, Society of African Missions and Pastoral Director at Beda College, Rome on “Listening as a support and a means for leadership”.

April 19th - 22nd - Discussions on all aspects of Institute life and mission.

April 23rd - Meeting of the Formation Executive Body to discuss placements for the International Houses of Formation.

April 26th - 28th - Meeting of the Generalitital Council.

May 15th - 23rd - Don Marco Tanghetti (Curia person with responsibility for Formation) to Ireland for ongoing discussions on the *Ratio formationis* [Plan of Formation for the Institute].

May 30th - June 6th - Fr General to Ireland for the final days, death and funeral of his sister, Mrs. Breda Smith.

June 12th - 19th - Participation of Fr General, Fr Anthony Meredith and Fr Joe O’Reilly in the solemn inauguration of the new Gentili Province at Grace Dieu Manor School, Leicestershire, the base for Gentili’s pioneering missionary work.

June 13th - 19th - D. Mariani represents Fr General at the 10th Provincial Congregation of the Italian Province at Calvario

June 30th - Fr General to Calvario and Stresa for the July 1st celebrations.

More Porta Latina Guests and Visitors



Seven parishioners from our parish of St. Charles in Wisbech came to Rome with Father John Doman and stayed at Porta Latina. Though the weather was a little wet, they soon felt very much at home with the community and enjoyed their visit.

Father Bob Bellwood, who lives in Normandy, visited us in Rome, early in May, as he attended the week-long conference entitled “Fatima Challenge”



The twin sisters of Robin Paulson, Sue Burton from Nottingham & Jill Warren from New Brunswick, Canada, came with him and stayed for a week at Porta Latina.

July 1st Celebrations at Stresa

Each year, the Rosminian family gathers at Stresa College to commemorate the anniversary of Rosmini's death on July 1st, a date in fact particularly significant for him due to its being in his time the Feast of the Precious Blood, a devotion very dear to him. It is also an occasion to celebrate the Jubilees of priesthood, of religious life and of Ascension of the members of the Rosminian Family. Over the years, the numbers attending this function has been increasing and a lot of the credit must go to the efforts of the organising committee and to the co-operation of the community of the College. Special thanks are also due to the unflinching presence of the local bishop, Mons. Renato Corti, and of Mons. Antonio Riboldi, retired Rosminian bishop of Acerra.

The eve of the ceremony is always marked by a torchlight procession from the Villa Bolongaro, where Rosmini died and now the Centre for Rosminian Studies, up the steep hill to the College church where the body of Rosmini lies in the crypt. Half-way up the arduous climb, there is always a well-merited pause at the joint monument to Rosmini and to his great friend, Alessandro Manzoni. More and more, this procession has been taking on the air of a civic procession in honour of Stresa's famous adopted son. The Mayor, a Rosminian scholar, and some of the Corporation members have always taken part but invitations are now being extended to the civic authorities of Rovereto (Rosmini's home town), Domodossola (where Calvario is situated), Borgomanero (Rosminian Sisters' mother-house) and other places with a Rosminian connection. It is envisaged that next year the torchlight procession, headed by the civic authorities, will wend its way through the town of Stresa rather than making a bee-line to the College.

The celebrations this year were particularly significant as the celebrant at the Mass was Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, Archbishop of Genoa and President of the Italian Episcopal Conference. (He and his secretary stayed at Calvario the previous night). Concelebrating with him were Archbishop Giovanni Moretti (retired Apostolic Nuncio to Belgium) and the ever-reliable Bishop Antonio Riboldi. A notable absence was that of Bishop Renato Corti on account of sickness, but who was represented by his Vicar-General. Among the many priests (diocesan and Rosminian) concelebrating were Fr Jim Flynn (Superior General) and don Claudio Papa (Provincial). A touch of colour was provided by a group of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre in their flowing cross-embossed robes. The congregation was ever ready to join the Calvario choir in singing the responses of the Mass and the two hymns in honour of Rosmini. As the church was unable to contain the whole congregation, the Mass could also be followed on video in some adjoining rooms.

The Cardinal chose the readings of the day (rather than the ones in the booklet provided) and as always with the Word of God, these were most relevant to the occasion – the condemnation and banishment of Amos, the 'inconvenient prophet', and Jesus's double cure of the paralytic. The main theme of his homily, an ever-actual one for the Church that has been constantly stressed by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, was Rosmini's dialogue between faith and reason and how his Christ-centred life enabled him to bear the resultant misunderstandings and sufferings. [As with all the Cardinal's homilies and addresses, the one at Stresa is to be found in the website of the Italian Episcopal Conference. An English summary is also given in ZENIT's July 5th edition].

Among the various Jubilarians who came up during the Mass to greet the Cardinal and to receive a record of their life of service, the loudest applause was reserved for Sr Tranquillina Mora who was celebrating 80 years of religious life and who had just returned to Italy after many years of serving in Venezuela and in Colombia. To forestall any conjectures about her age, it has to be said that entry into religious life in the past was counted from when one entered, at a very young age, a juniorate or an Aspirancy!

After Mass, at least 280 ticketed people sat down to a fine meal in the two large refectories in the College and in two small marquees that had been erected for the purpose. The meal itself was served by what seemed to be a group of professional caterers but who turned out in fact to be members of a formal association of Ascribed members and friends who help out at Calvario.

Prior to the Mass, there were personal testimonies by four peoples whose lives had been touched and affected by the spirituality of Rosmini. The first talk was by an elderly lady, a philosophy professor and a disciple of the famous Professor Sciacca who had been converted to Christianity through his studies of Rosmini's writings. She reminisced about the ice-breaking 1955 Stresa conference on the 100th anniversary of Rosmini's death. It was ice-breaking in the sense that it was then that Rosminians, living up to then, at least in Italy, in the shadow of Rosmini's condemnation, for the first time, with implicit Church approval, began to celebrate the figure and thought of their Founder. Fr Bozzetti (Superior General) and Prof. Sciacca were the ones who prepared the ground for this bold initiative which was a great success.

Next followed a priest of Novara diocese who told us of the prayer group in honour of Rosmini which he had started with the bishop's approval and blessing. He was succeeded by a Rosminian Sister whose heart-warming and heartfelt account of her Rosminian religious vocation evoked rapturous applause. Finally, it was the turn of a Rosminian priest, a noted historian and a demanding teacher and who is noted for his long if eloquent talks! This time, though, he surprised us all by his brevity and he concluded by telling us that he had shed a tear at the unveiling of Rosmini's portrait at the Beatification ceremony, something that not even his peeling of onions in the past had ever accomplished!